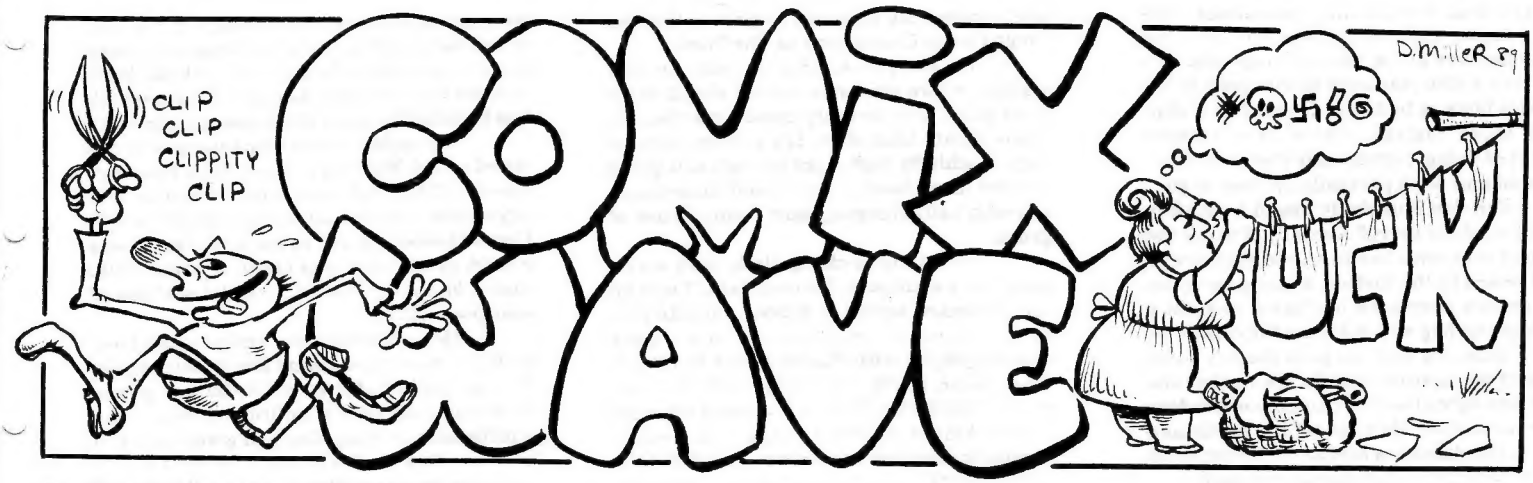


WHAT'S THIS SHIT?

The early bird swallowed a careless worm and took off into the wild blue yonder. After a short while, the worm stuck his head out of the bird's ass and asked: *Hey, bird, how high up are we?* The bird replied, *About 5,000 feet.* Said worm: *You wouldn't shit me, would you?*

People who write on shithouse walls
Should wrap their shit in little round balls
And people who read these rhymes of wit
Should eat those little round balls of shit!

The little worm lowers itself
by a self-shat thread.
-Jack Kerouac

Ah, you were never born. A bird shit on a fence post and the sun hatched you out.

That bozo can fall in a shithouse and come out smelling like a rose.

She thinks her shit don't stink.

He who farts in church sits in his own pew.

You have to say this line fast:
See how that ship sinks.

Keep messin' 'roun' here, boy, an' you gonna be asshole deep in alligator shit.

Life is a shit sandwich.

That was a good shitkicker.

I love that shitkickin' music.

S.O.S. Same ol' shit.

You got shit for brains.

You just don't give a shit, do you?

Shit on a shingle for breakfast again!

One of the systems at Copymat where I typeset this newsletter is named Asshole, so you have to get into Asshole to see what programs are available. I noted one file named SHIT, so I said *What's this shit?* and I opened it up. A young woman had left a paper on Medieval poetry there along with her immediate feeling about the subject. Holy Shit, Batman!

We Americans are familiar with shit. We know all about it. We take a lot of it on our jobs. We know trouble is coming if it hits the fan. We know the trouble is worse than usual if the shit is deep. If something doesn't go the way we thought it would, we say Shit! When we don't care, we say we don't give a shit, a reason why the foreign visitor is likely to think most of us live constipated lives. If we come across something unusual we say *what kinda shit is that?* If we hear a hard luck story and want to show that we're not really sympathetic with the teller, we say *tough shit!* Our mothers tell us to clean up that shit in our rooms [always at the precise moment when we are on our way out the back door to play some baseball] and we think *oh, shit, why do I hafta do that NOW??* and if mom cleans the room up we are likely to tell the guys later that mom threw out all my shit. She, of course, never says shit; she says *things.*

Mothers have a special relationship to shit. Freud spent a lot of time explaining the way mothers turn shit into gold. The idea is simple. A kid learns that his shit is valuable to mom, because she spends so much time and emotional energy trying to get that shit in a certain place at a certain time, in a toilet or a potty and not on the bedroom or living room floor. The kid knows he's got some valuable stock and he learns that if he uses it wisely he gets increased dividends. Mom will beg, plead, and bribe, anything to keep that shit going into the pot. A mom lives in terror of coming into a kid's room and finding shit smeared all over the walls. This form of creative act extended into the adult world was known in the fifties as Abstract Expressionism. I'm sure more than one hip mom looked at the works of Jackson Pollock and said *what's this shit?*

My dad always said *poop*. When I was little, I can remember my mother saying *poopie*, a word I always hated. Elzie Segar had a character in his POPEYE strip called Poopdeck Pappy. In his PORNOGRAFOLLIES, Curt McDowell has a scene in which the anus is referred to as a poop shoot. One of the grossest jokes I remember hearing as a boy went like this. *A boy goes into the bathroom and finds his mother leaning over the tub. He stands there looking at her nether parts for a minute then asks, "hey, mom, what's that?" "That's my tiger," she answers. "Boy," says the kid, "he must be a mean bastard. He's got blood in one eye and shit in the other."*

I'm using *he* in this essay because I was a boy, not because girls don't have the same experience with childhood *gold.*

Shit was one of the first *dirty* words I heard when I ventured out of the yard and into the wider world of the street and playground in Lincoln, Nebraska, circa 1940. Boys used it for its shock value at first. It made parents go for their belts or ping pong paddles. Later it was just another verbal habit. Girls never used it and I was truly shocked when I met some girls at Walgreen's Drugstore who not only used shit, but fuck, dick, and cunt as well. We boys thought that was our little secret, you see, that we could go around saying shit, piss, fuck, goddamn, cunt, pussy, and all that stuff all we wanted to, but like the boys in LITTLE LULU we banded together and rejected the use of such coarse language from little girls. Coming from one of the guys on the baseball field, shit was manly, tough, grown up, but coming from a girl it was nasty. Girls who talked dirty were considered fast, loose, and easy. If a nice girl said *shit!* you knew she had been pushed too far and that it was only a brief lapse of decorum. She was still a nice girl. The bad girls said shit all the time and, of course, they were simply affirming their equal rights, but we didn't think that way in the forties. There were only good and bad girls and boys then and good girls never said shit. As far as we guys were concerned, they probably never did it either.

Shit, for those of you who have never heard the word, is excrement, waste, do-do, poop, feces, fecal matter, ca-ca, or Number 2. Remember Bill Cosby asking why his grade school teacher had to know whether or not he was one-ing it or two-ing it?

Shit is all right in foreign languages. Remember Lieutenant Scheisskopf in Joseph Heller's CATCH-22? His name means Shithead.

As a boy, I remember working men saying *I gotta take a shit* and I always

THIS is an anagram of **SHIT!**

COMIX WAVE 83. January, 1990,
© Clay Geerdes. Box 7081;, Berkeley, CA 94707. Logo by David Miller. The All Dirty Word Issue. Not to be shown to squeamish parents!

thought that was a funny misnomer. The only people who really take shit are the coprophagiacs at the mental hospitals. You don't take a shit; you leave it. Vito used to tell his little boys at bedtime: *Go and do a shit.* Much more logical. There is a certain amount of doing, particularly if you are four-years-old and don't particularly have to go.

Shit fire! Somebody tossed a match in the old outdoor privy? Actually, I think the origin of that term lies in an old Hallowe'en joke I heard in the forties. A guy goes up on the victim's porch. In his hand he's got a brown paper bag which he has filled with his own or some dog shit. He puts the bag down and gets out a stick match. He strikes the match and lights the bag, banging on the door at the same time. He runs off the porch and hides in the darkness across the street so he can watch as the victim stamps out the fire.

In college in San Francisco, I had a drama teacher who loved to talk about shit. He had to intellectualize it, of course, and he referred to the usage of dirty language as scatology. I know, you always thought scatology was the study of scat-singing. Just like city people are unlikely to know that road apples are horse turds. Anyway, this teacher got his jollies telling all of us about the intricate scatological references in some European playwright and while one would expect to find articles re scatology in folklore or abnormal psychological journals it is likely that some wag has already done one on the scatology of underground cartoonists like Robert Crumb. Crumb invented Mr. Snoid who was flushed down the toilet and lived for awhile in the sewer. The Sewer Snoid was quite popular in the sixties. Crumb drew out his personal anal sex fantasies in BIG ASS COMIX, probably one of the strangest comic books published in the early 1970s. In BIG ASS, the Snoid actually spends a lot of time inside a woman's anus. When he is outside, he often rides on her hips. Nearly all of the women in Crumb's comix have large hips and legs in contrast to the traced models in the overground comic books.

Ballet dancers leave each other with a *merde!* For them the French word for shit means good luck. It's like an actor saying *break a leg!*

One year Captain Carrot cartoonist Scott Shaw covered himself with peanut butter and entered the costume contest at the San Diego Comic Convention as The Turd.

In Haight-Ashbury back in the sixties, when someone talked about some *good shit,* they usually meant marijuana. "Man, I hate that shit . It's a dizzy, dopey; high, a schluffy high. I got enough shit going around in my head. I don't need some dumb schvako hallucinogen," said Lenny Bruce of grass.

To Lenny, a cheap little club was a *toilet* or a *shithouse* . He once said, "I was on the awkward squad in school. Couldn't do shit." Lenny published his own autobiography with Playboy back in 1965. It was called HOW TO TALK DIRTY AND INFLUENCE PEOPLE. A few years after his death Albert Goldman used Lawrence Schiller's research to produce LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: LENNY BRUCE (1971). To read about Lenny in relation to Boomer Humor, see Tony Hendra's excellent historical memoir GOING TOO FAR. "Dope," writes Goldman, "so deadens the muscles of the rectum that most heavy users have to decide each day which is more important--to get high or take a shit."

I had the honor of being one of the many random souls to be insulted by Lenny Bruce when he played the Off Broadway Club in North Beach in 1965. He did not know it was me standing out there on the sidewalk with my wife with a small group of curiosity seekers, but he called us all freeloaders anyway. We were supposed to come in the club and join the dwellers in the smoky darkness, buy our two overpriced watery drinks and pay for the privilege of having our lifestyle trashed by a junkie. I just smiled and formed a fuck you, Lenny, and walked on. But Bruce got to me. I have an ego, too. Who was this little shit who thought he had the right to dump on people just because he had a mike in his hand? Bruce catered to public masochism and he was quite successful at it, being a masochist himself. Time and again he was warned that he couldn't say words like cocksucker onstage and he went out and said them. He was busted in March of 1962 for saying cocksucker and after that his life was a series of busts and trials. He was seen as a pathfinder in the sixties, a martyr in the war for freedom of expression. By some. By the majority he was seen just as a little boy who thought it was cute to say dirty words in public. *What is a clean word to society?* asked Lenny in 1965. Well, it wasn't cocksucker, Lenny. Or shit, which has become the word of all meanings in 1989.

Consider the various usages of the word in Ed McBain's latest 87th Precinct novel, LULLABY. *Everytime a cop in this city shoots a black man, you got deep shit (43).* Convicts *shoot the shit in the yard (50).* It was a cold, gray shitty day (116). A junkie talks about *knowing how to kick the shit out of somebody (223).*

Hey, *shit happens,* and you just have to deal with it. If you don't like it, shit on you. *He's as full of shit as a Christmas goose.* This is usually said of politicians who make a profession of lying. *Boy, you gotta lotta shit in here.* Means, the place is crowded. The shit can be good like a mint collection of PLASTIC MAN or bad like a lot of bent up soda pop cans and leftover pizza boxes. *Flush that shit down the toilet!* Usually means a junkie is about to get busted and is flushing away the evidence before the cops break in. *Boy, was that shitty!* Often said of a bad movie or concert. *Who shit in your face?* A put down used by boys in the forties, but some just thought this was a witty way to greet a friend. If you got offended, the wit was likely to say *tough shit!* or *tough shitski!* There was always a lot of *heavy shit* coming down on the playground. The boys often learned their macho poses from saturday afternoon *shitkickers* [western movies]. In the Navy, we often had *shit on a shingle* for breakfast [chipped beef on toast]. What's for chow was answered with *S.O.S.* [Same old shit]. The toilet was the head or the *shitter.* Talking was *shooting the shit.* If you got reprimanded by a senior officer, you *took a ration of shit.* One of the favored epithets of our Company Commander in boot camp in San Diego was *Wipe that shit-eating grin off your face, sailor!*

The old Boatswain's Mates, many of them lifetime alkies had the most colorful language. Tell them a story and they would let you know *sonny, you can't shit an old turd.* I remember one old salt stumbling through the compartment on his way to the head singing:

Ratshit, batship, belly full of beans,
Bullshit in the Boatswain's jeans.

"HE'S A GAS!" - WRECKS REED.
"HE DOESN'T HAVE TO FIGHT CRIME. CRIMINALS AVOID HIM." — BARUD WAWA.

STILL AVAILABLE FROM CW
ANIMAL BITES ! 50¢/ST.

NEW CASLOR'. 50¢/ST from CW.

DOG COMIX 4. 50¢/1 STAMP
RANDY PALKE
4841 BIRCH LANE
GILBERT, MN 55741-9631

THE BUST OF AUGUSTUS CAESAR
50¢ STAMP. M. CUSIMANO
POB 2565, HARVARD SQUARE STA
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02238.

COMIX WAVE 83. February, 1990, © Clay Geerdes. Box 7081;, Berkeley, CA 94707.

COMIX PLUGOLA

Jim Conatser's mini MUTT series. 4 issues, $2 pp from him at POB 1337, Dubuque, IA 52001.

Ace Backwards has joined us with a TWISTED IMAGE newsletter. Ace is one of Berkeley's funniest contemporary cartoonists. See sample strips on this page. Send him a couple of bucks and get his stuff. 1630 University Ave., Apt 26, Berkeley, CA 94703.

Did you notice MAD 291 had Mutant Ninja Turtles all over the front and back covers? The Turtle quarter goes live in March of 1990. Maybe you can trade some of your bat stuff for some turtle stuff. My most frightening turtle experience was walking into Long's Drugstore in El Cerrito, California and nearly running into a giant display of Ninja Turtle breakfast cereal! Shades of Kellogg's PEP!

EL VIBORA 115, and 116 contain a perverse view of Alice's adventures in a new kind of wonderland. $7 each from J. M. Berenguer, Plaza Beatas 3, Barcelona, Spain.

CAUSE AND EFFECT COMIX is 40¢/stamp from Matthew Madden, 210 N. State ST., Ann Arbor, MI 48104.

PRETTY POISON is 50¢/stamp from Paul Kent Sewell, 540 Stoneford Ave., Oakland, CA 94603.

MISC COMICS 31 is a fat Hallowe'en issue with a Hilary Barta cover. $2.20 pp from Randy Paske, 4841 Birch Ln, Gilbert, MN 55741-9631.

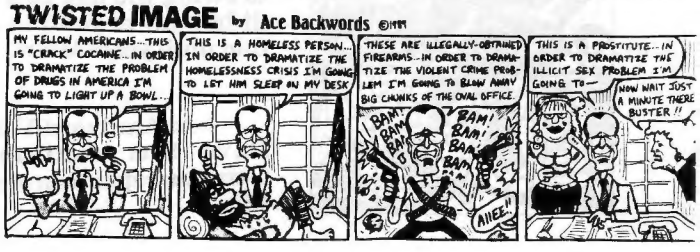
Randy Z. Crawford, Box 255, Minden, W. Va. has FREE ICE CREAM and S'MUD THING for 50¢/ Stamp ea. THE SENSUAL SHE-BULK and BAT STUD got for 25¢/stamp ea. Adults only. Send an age statement.

Rip Off Press, POB 4686, Auburn, CA 95604, has taken over publication of WIMMEN'S COMIX. #15 has a cover by and is edited by Phoebe Gloeckner. The issue deals with what it is like to grow up as a little girl. The title is open only to "Female" cartoonists, bit of reverse sexism there, but...

My favorite comic title this fall has to be Caliber's CHEERLEADERS FROM HELL. Devil worship, Ninjas, and demonic possession! Oy! What, no Nazis or Kluxers?

And for sure you'll want Knockabout's SEVEN DEADLY SINS. Hunt Emerson and others poke fun at the old bugaboos. Great Cover.

TWISTED IMAGE by Ace Backwards ©1989
GREAT MOMENTS IN CAPITALISM
THE COURAGEOUS TALE OF TWO GOOD AMERICANS WHO OVERCAME ADVERSITY!!!!
WOW!! WHAT A CATASTROPHE!! THAT NUCLEAR EXPLOSION WIPED OUT HALF THE COUNTRY!!
DAMN! WHAT A MESS!!!
WE HAD BETTER GET RIGHT TO WORK!!!
NOT A MINUTE TO SPARE!!
GET YOUR T-SHIRTS!! GET YOUR SOUVENIRES!! GET YOUR NUCLEAR MEMENTOS!
SURVIVED THE NUKE OF '19 -3
NUKE MANIA
SEE? THE SYSTEM WORKS!


TWISTED IMAGE by Ace Backwards ©1989
MY FELLOW AMERICANS...THIS IS "CRACK" COCAINE...IN ORDER TO DRAMATIZE THE PROBLEM OF DRUGS IN AMERICA I'M GOING TO LIGHT UP A BOWL...
THIS IS A HOMELESS PERSON... IN ORDER TO DRAMATIZE THE HOMELESSNESS CRISIS I'M GOING TO LET HIM SLEEP ON MY DESK
THESE ARE ILLEGALLY-OBTAINED FIREARMS...IN ORDER TO DRAMATIZE THE VIOLENT CRIME PROBLEM I'M GOING TO BLOW AWAY BIG CHUNKS OF THE OVAL OFFICE.
BAM! BAM! BAM!
AIIEE!
THIS IS A PROSTITUTE...IN ORDER TO DRAMATIZE THE ILLICIT SEX PROBLEM I'M GOING TO—
NOW WAIT JUST A MINUTE THERE BUSTER!!

Sexley's
Believe It or Nuts!
by Ace Backwords ©89
HMM... MOST INTRIGUING... ...YAHS...
INTRODUCTORY SMUT-101
WHY IS PORNOGRAPHIC MATERIAL SO IMPORTANT TO MEN?? LET'S FIND OUT, SHALL WE...
FEMINISTS CLAIM THAT MEN PURCHASE PORNOGRAPHY BECAUSE THEY'RE "SEXIST"... THAT "PORNO" IS A SYMPTOM OF A MALE-DOMINATED POWER STRUCTURE THAT "EXPLOITS" WOMEN... BUT IS THAT SO??
LOOKING AT NAKED WOMEN IS BAD!!
STAMP OUT PORNO!
XXX PORNO
SEX IS SEXIST
.... HAVE THEY EVER CONSIDERED THAT IT'S BASICALLY A MATTER OF BIOLOGY? FACT IS, MEN CANNOT HAVE SEX UNLESS THEY ARE FIRST AROUSED BY THE SIGHT OF THE WOMAN, WHILE THE WOMAN CAN HAVE SEX AROUSED OR NOT...
UM... I'LL BE WITH YOU IN A SECOND, HONEY-SNOOGUMS!
WAKE ME WHEN IT'S OVER... "YAWN!"
COULD THIS SIMPLE BIOLOGICAL FACT OF PROCREATION EXPLAIN WHY PHYSICAL APPEARANCE IS SO MUCH MORE IMPORTANT TO WOMEN THAN MEN? PERHAPS SO.
HOW TO MAINTAIN YOUR SEXY PHYSIQUE SO YOUR MAN CAN GET A HARD-ON
COSMO
THE 30-DAY SEX SLUT DIET
SOME FEMINIST ERRONEOUSLY MAINTAIN THAT FOR THE SEXES TO BE "EQUAL", THEY'RE SUPPOSED TO BEHAVE THE "SAME". ... BUT CONSIDER THE DIFFERENT REACTIONS HERE
THEREFORE, I MAINTAIN THAT OGLING BUXOM BABES IS NOT "SEXIST" BUT IS, IN FACT, AN ESSENTIAL ACT IN ASSURING THE PERPETUATION OF THE HUMAN SPECIES.
PERVERT!!
THOUGH, OF COURSE NOT EVERYBODY AGREES WITH THIS THEORY!!
SLUTS

The *Acid Man Society* Series of Canadian artist Robert Pasternak continues with issues 10 and 11 available at this time. $1/stamp for the pair or the complete series to date (11 issues) for $5 pp. from Comix Wave.

THE ART OF GARRY HARDMAN contains some of the artist's best work. This is a 16 page DZ and it is $2.50 pp from Comix Wave.

REAL SCREAM COMICS #16 is #1 from Mike Culpepper, 808 Stanley St., Nelson, B. C., Canada V1L 1N7.

SLAM BANG 30 is $3.50 from Allen Freeman, 157 Northwood Rd., Frankfort, KY 40601-1477.

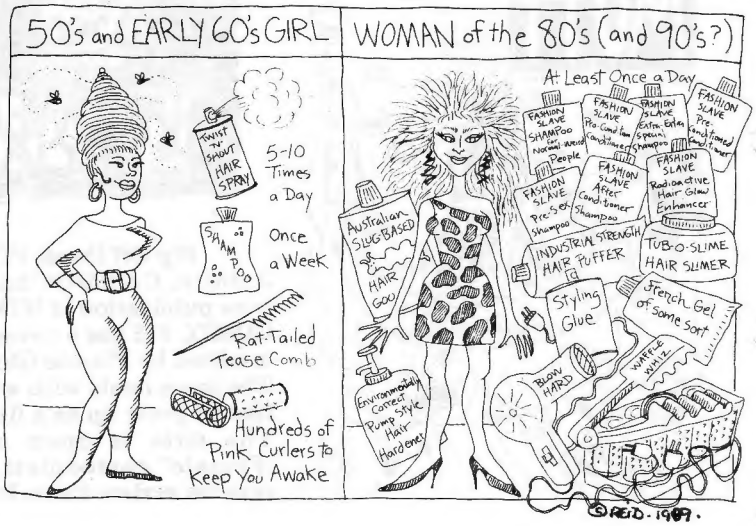
THE GREAT IMPOSSIBLE is 25¢/stamp from Wheatcake Productions, 690 Industrial Dr., Talla-hassee, FLA 32310.

BLAB is the nicest underground magazine to date. #4 reprints Jaxon's old INFINITY essay on ugs along with a follow-up suggesting some reasons ugs followed the pattern they did. Drew Friedman did the cover and the book is now published by Denis Kitchen. Nice book paper. It is a mistake to use cheap paper on a book. My copy of the CRUMB CHECKLIST is already browning at the edges from the acid in that cheap paper.

I got a kick out of Libby Reid's YOU DON'T HAVE TO PUT TO BE POPULAR [PENGUIN, 1989, $6.95]. Reid lets you know in no uncertain graphics what it is like to be a woman on the loose in the eighties. The line drawings are in the Lynda Barry mode. Reid draws a lot like Susan Isaacs writes. If you haven't read SHINING THROUGH. Get one now.

Steve Willis paid me a visit on November 10, 1989. I took the creator of Morty the Dog on a tour of Telegraph Avenue and he got scammed and spare-changed all along refugee row. I asked Steve why the name Morty and he said he didn't know. He started drawing the dog as a kid and didn't get around to naming him until years later.

At Aardvard-Vanaheim, Dave Sim continues his Cerebus reprint project with #23.


50's and EARLY 60's GIRL
WOMAN of the 80's (and 90's?)
TWIST 'n SHOUT HAIR SPRAY
5-10 Times a Day
SHAMPOO
Once a Week
Rat-Tailed Tease Comb
Hundreds of Pink Curlers to Keep You Awake
At Least Once a Day
FASHION SLAVE SHAMPOO
FASHION SLAVE Pre-Set Shampoo
FASHION SLAVE After Conditioner Shampoo
FASHION SLAVE Radioactive Hair Glow Enhancer
Australian SLUG BASED HAIR GOO
INDUSTRIAL STRENGTH HAIR PUFFER
TUBO-SLIME HAIR SLIMER
Styling Glue
Stench Gel of Some Sort
Environmentally Correct Pump Style Hair Hardener
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